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SUBJECT: UNSC ACHIEVES BURMA PRESS STATEMENT

¶1. (SBU) During consultations on May 22, the Security Council debated the U.S.-drafted press statement on Burma to reach Council consensus. Ambassador DiCarlo underlined international concern with developments around ASSK and highlighted clear member support for a timely, substantive statement from the Council. She stressed the significant efforts of Council members to reach a consensus, including two experts meetings and a series of bilateral consultations.

¶2. (SBU) Russian PR Churkin complained that the Council has already "passed its limits" by issuing previous statements on Burma, which is not a matter of international peace and security and therefore should not be discussed in the Council. He said that even if he had to stand alone, he "would protect the UN Charter and not micro-manage domestic political problems." Russia's compromise was to drop the first paragraph of the U.S. text, which linked the statement to the recent negative developments with regard to Aung San Suu Kyi. In a departure from the traditional role of the Security Council President, Churkin added that he would not read an agreed statement to the press on this issue.

¶3. (SBU) The majority of Council members spoke in support of the draft, including the UK, France, Turkey, Austria, Costa Rica, Croatia, Japan, Uganda and Burkina Faso. With the Russian option on the table, the Chinese political coordinator said he "supported the U.S. draft in principle," but the Russian draft was "better." Vietnam and Libya supported a message from the Council but stressed the importance of Council unity. Throughout the discussion Churkin said that there would be no statement without consensus. Members agreed to delay proceedings briefly while interested delegations (U.S., China, Russia, France, UK, Austria, Costa Rica and Japan) negotiated a revised statement (see para 4 for final statement). Since Churkin refused to read the statement to the press after the meeting, UK PR Sawers, while briefing the press, read key elements of the statement.

¶4. (SBU) Begin Statement:

"The members of the Security Council express their concern about the political impact of recent developments relating to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

"The members of the Security Council reaffirm, in this context, their statements of 11 October 2007 and 2 May 2008 and, in this regard, reiterate the importance of the release of all political prisoners. The members of the Security Council reiterate the need for the Government of Myanmar to create the necessary conditions for a genuine dialogue with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all concerned parties and ethnic groups in order to achieve an inclusive national reconciliation with the support of the United Nations.

"The members of the Security Council affirm their commitment

to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Myanmar and,
in that context, reiterate that the future of Myanmar lies in
the hands of all of its people.

End Statement.

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